



TOWN OF NORTH SALEM

TOWN HOUSING BOARD
270 Titicus Road
North Salem, NY 10560

Telephone: (914) 669-0245
Fax: (914) 485-1920
E-mail: jwill@northsalemny.org

**Town of North Salem
TOWN HOUSING BOARD**

October 24, 2016
Delancey Hall
7:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Anthony Navarro, Chairman**
 William Monti
 Michael Palma
 Sol Schepps

ALSO PRESENT: **Janice Will, Secretary**

Chairman Navarro called the meeting to order, asking for thoughts on what the Board might plan for 2017. He wondered if there are things they should do things proactively or wait until something comes up.

Sol Schepps thought perhaps the Board should review the Code.

Mr. Navarro asked if they should look for types of housing, although he was not sure what they can do.

William Monti told the others that the Ambulance Corps is extremely short-staffed and asked if that could be because there is a shortage of qualified people or because there are qualified people who can't volunteer because they can't afford to live in Town.

Chairman Navarro said the town of Greenburgh is looking into ways to provide work-force housing; he thought this would be similar to affordable housing in terms of grants, etc. He said work-force housing is not Federally recognized, but it can be worked into the local code.

Mr. Monti asked if that wasn't the intent behind the lower-priced houses in Salem Chase.

Michael Palma asked how the Town could prevent people from other parts of the county who also don't work locally from renting/buying such work-force housing.

The Chairman said it depends on where the financing comes from. He asked if perhaps the Board could oversee the purchase and rehabilitation of something.

Mr. Monti was interested in knowing the make-up of and how long the waiting list for Bridleside is.

Chairman Navarro said Bridleside would use one Area Mean Income figure, because the apartments are rentals; properties for sale allow a higher percentage of AMI.

Mr. Monti asked where there might be other people on waiting lists and how can the THB encourage people to build or otherwise accommodate this type of housing.

The Chairman thought maybe a mix of affordable, work-force and market-rate housing would work.

Mr. Palma pointed out that it is difficult to find land large enough to build something on any kind of scale.

The Chairman thought a small project could work also. He explained that he looked at one in Greenburgh where 5 modular townhouses are to be built; the total cost of the land and the units is about \$300,000.

Mr. Palma thought creating more of the mixed-use type of housing that exists in Croton Falls (first floor retail; second/third floor apartments) would be good. He added that he didn't know where it could be built, although there is some space on Fields Lane.

Chairman Navarro remarked that 7 Springs is a large parcel on Route 22 next to Waterview/Salem Hills. He said he has met other people who do the same kind of construction Wilder-Balter does; the source of financing will dictate what kind of housing one can build/multiple sources may be utilized and combined.

Mr. Palma said he would like the emphasis to be on creating housing for people who live and/or work in Town.

Chairman Navarro stated that if the money comes from the County or HUD, there must be an affordable element (which can also be work-force); for example, one could build 60 units and allot 20 of them for affordable housing which would be open to all, leaving 40 for local work-force. He went on to say that there is no mandate in the Code for work-force housing; it is used informally in other towns.

Mr. Palma was interested to know how many North Salem residents are renting apartments in Bridleside.

Mr. Monti thought the THB could ask someone from Wilder-Balter to meet with them and provide an update, and the Chairman agreed.

Mr. Monti said they could also get Wilder-Balter's thoughts on the concept of work-force housing.

Chairman Navarro thought that if the Board could smooth the way for them/make it reasonable, they might build something like work-force housing in Town.

Mr. Palma suggested they invite Supervisor Warren Lucas to attend a meeting with Wilder-Balter. He stated that once Wilder-Balter converted their plan from luxury townhouses to affordable rentals, there was really not much resistance.

Mr. Monti offered as an example of a small project the renovation of 3, run-down old buildings in Croton Falls by Patrick Donovan. Each has 2-3 apartments, and the buildings look nice now. Mr. Monti said there are other buildings in poor condition that could do with similar renovation.

The Chairman stated that the County will pay up to \$150,000/unit to purchase appropriate housing. He added that there are other sources of money, but he does not know who/what they are.

Mr. Schepps asked if the Board was talking about both rental and for-purchase work-force housing. He said that there have been problems with the tenants in some rental buildings in Town, so the Board would have to be prepared to deal with people's opinions if they were to propose rental units.

Mr. Palma asked if anyone knew anything about the former Dino and Artie's property in Croton Falls (a former "brown field"). He wondered if there are wells on the land and figured it is probably about 10,000 sq. ft./a 3-story building could be put there.

Mr. Monti pointed out that there is no septic and no room for one.

Mr. Palma agreed that was a problem.

Mr. Schepps thought putting a business there would have to be considered in terms of traffic and parking.

Mr. Palma thought it would only work for apartments built above a parking place.

Chairman Navarro agreed that might work. He thought maybe the Board should see what is available in Town (either land or buildings in need of renovation).

Mr. Palma said there is a vacant parcel on Peach Lake Road near the market, and a building there might be able to hook into the Peach Lake sewer system.

Mr. Monti thought that likely as the system is not working at capacity.

The Chairman asked the Board to think about work-force housing, noting that the cost of land will be the biggest issue.

Mr. Palma commented that Wilder-Balter could tell them how they figure out how much they can pay per unit of housing on a piece of land.

Mr. Monti suggested they get a sense of how things are going at Bridleside and then just have an informal meeting with Supervisor Lucas and maybe Deputy Supervisor Peter Kamenstein to raise the subject of looking into work-force housing possibilities.

Mr. Palma thought the work-force aspect might interest the Town.

The Board discussed local people who would be interested in such housing, and the Chairman remarked that his daughter has a teacher who commutes to North Salem from Brooklyn.

Mr. Schepps thought such a proposal should eventually be discussed with the Town Attorney.

Mr. Monti commented that Bridleside looks good and is well-managed.

Chairman Navarro said they should get a report from Wilder-Balter and ask what their parameters are for developing properties, adding that they may not build smaller projects, although there are companies that do.

Mr. Monti asked where someone like Pat Donovan could get financing to do the type of renovations he has done in the past with his own money.

The Chairman replied that there are ways of working with non-profits which would then make one eligible for funding; this is what Wilder-Balter has done.

Mr. Monti was interested in having something put into the Code requiring owners of moderate-income houses to certify that they are maintaining them in the condition they were in when they purchased them.

Mr. Schepps felt the Board might not be authorized to do something like this, and Chairman Navarro agreed, adding that they may do so at the time of transfer but perhaps not otherwise.

Mr. Monti said he meant requesting something to be added to the Code. He added that he would just ask the property-owners to self-certify/write something; he was not suggesting that the Board would inspect properties.

Mr. Palma said a baseline could be created from an engineer's report.

Mr. Monti thought that by requiring the self-certification, an owner could then be required to restore a house to the appropriate condition/funds could be withheld from the sale of the property to cover the cost of repair/restoration.

Mr. Palma thought maybe the Board could only ask that property-owners self-certify that the property conforms to codes.

Mr. Schepps said he will review the Board's charter.

Mr. Palma said they could still ask to have something added to the Code requiring annual self-certification that the property is being maintained in good condition.

The Chairman said he will contact someone at Wilder-Balter to try and arrange a meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Will, Recording Secretary